GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PERSONNEL,PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:802
ANSWERED ON:22.10.2008
MINING OF URANIUM BY ONGC
Acharia Shri Basudeb

Will the Minister of PERSONNEL,PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has forwarded a proposal to Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) to enter the field of Uranium mining in the country;

(b) if so the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon;

(c) the plan of the Government to increase the production of Uranium in the country;

(d) whether the Government proposes to develop technology to recycle used nuclear fuel to sustain future demand of this country;and

(e) if so, the details thereof and steps taken so far/proposed to be taken in this regard? .

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER`S OFFICE AND MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL,PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN)

(a) & (b) Yes Sir.Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) a Public Sector Undertaking under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has received a proposal from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) conveying their willingness to enter into an MoU for Joint exploration and mining of uranium within the country and overseas, which is under consideration.

(c) UCIL is setting up new mines & mills in Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh and also planning mining and milling in Meghalaya. Expansion of the production capacity of the existing two mines in Jharkhand has also been undertaken.Simultaneously exploration efforts to identify additional prospects by the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration & Research have also been augmented.

(d)& (e) India has adopted a closed fuel cycle approach in which irradiated fuel is reprocessed.Under the three stage Nuclear Power Programme, which India is pursuing,reprocessing of the spent fuel is an important component.The spent fuel form the first stage of our power programme is already being processed to recover valuable fissile materials as well as leftover fertile material,for its recycling in the second stage of our programme.